

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AREA STUDY
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

MONTHLY REPORT #1
JUNE 2001

PREPARED FOR:
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

PREPARED BY:
DUANY PLATER-ZYBERK & COMPANY

STUDY TEAM:
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

COUNTY STUDY SUMMARY	1
CONSULTANTS CONTRACT INFORMATION	2
C.A.C. CONTACT INFORMATION	4
TASKS	6
MEETING MINUTES (MAY 2001)	7
MONTHLY ACTIVITIES BY CONSULTANT	10
RELATED STUDIES	12

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AREA STUDY

(source: Miami-Dade County website, Department of Planning & Zoning)

Miami-Dade County is well known for its beaches, parks and cities. But did you know that Miami-Dade County has an agricultural industry with a total economic impact of over 800 million dollars? Miami-Dade County leads the State in the production of tropical vegetables, tropical fruits and ornamental nurseries, and ranks second in the production of winter vegetables and ornamental fish. (Source: University of Florida, Economic Impact of Agriculture and Agribusiness in Miami-Dade County, FAMRC Industry Report 97-1, August 1997) Moreover, approximately 8,500 persons are directly or indirectly employed by Miami-Dade County's agricultural industry. (Source: Miami-Dade County Department of Planning & Zoning, Research Division)

Miami-Dade County agriculture faces a number of challenges, including development pressures, water supply, and offshore competition. The purpose of the Agriculture and Rural Area Study is to collect and analyze information concerning the long-term economic outlook of Miami-Dade County's agricultural industry, and to formulate recommendations to enhance the industry's economic viability. The Study will also recommend compatible uses for surplus agricultural lands.

Consultant Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company is conducting the Agriculture and Rural Area Study under contract to Miami-Dade County, with extensive public involvement. The University of Florida is conducting a significant portion of the data collection for the Study under separate contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Study is occurring over an 18-month period, and is scheduled for completion in November 2002. The Study Area includes all land that is:

- planned for Agricultural use in Miami-Dade County's Comprehensive Development Land Use Plan;
- zoned AU (Agricultural);
- has an agricultural property tax exemption, or is;
- currently in agricultural use.

The County has established a 16-member Citizens' Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from agricultural and community interests, to ensure active public participation in the Agriculture and Rural Area Study. All Citizens' Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public, and interested persons are encouraged to attend. The first meeting of the Citizens' Advisory Committee will be held on Monday, May 14, 2001, 6 pm, at the Miami-Dade Cooperative Extension Service Auditorium, 18710 SW 288 Street, Homestead. Additional opportunities for public involvement will occur as public workshops provisionally scheduled for March and October 2002, and a community planning charrette that is provisionally scheduled to occur in March 2002.

Note: The May 14th meeting was held as scheduled. Meeting minutes are included in this report.

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CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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1. ONGOING TASKS (this month)

TASK 1: INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Task 1a: Environmental & Physical Analysis of Agricultural Land Use Practices

Task 1b: Agriculture and Agribusiness Update (UF under separate contract)

Task 1c: Economic Outlook

TASK 3: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Task 3a: Citizens' Advisory Committee

Task 3b: Related Studies Coordination

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY
Miami-Dade Cooperative Extension Service Auditorium
18710 SW 288th Street, Homestead, Florida**

6:00 p.m., May 14th 2001

Board Members Present

Ivonne Alexander
John Alger
Santiago Garcia
Noble Hendrix
Santiago Iglesias
Bill Losner
Phil Marraccini
Cooper McMillan
James Pierce
Brent Probinsky (arrived late)
Ron Weeks
Craig Wheeling

Board Members Absent

Erik Teitig
Reed Olszack
Karsten Rist
Mark Kraus

Minutes

1. Welcoming remarks by Miami-Dade County Manager, Steve Shiver
2. Welcoming remarks by C. Lee Rawlinson, Jr., Acting Assistant Director for Planning from the Miami-Dade County Department of and Zoning.
 - Lee Rawlinson asked that Board Member remember the three “C’s” for this study:
(1) Creativity, (2) Connection to community, (3) Commitment
 - Introduction of the team members from the County:
 - Jerry Bell, Project Manager
 - Don Krug, Planner
 - Jay Williams, Attorney (here for a Q & A session on the “Sunshine Law”)
 - Introduction of the Consultants: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ)
 - Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Principal
 - Marina Khoury, Project Manager

3. Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk asked all sub-consultants to briefly introduce themselves.
 - Debra Childs from URS, GIS mapping and analysis
 - Douglas Krieger, Ph-D, contingent valuation study of the value of agricultural land.
 - Michael Lauer from Planning Works, also representing Frielich, Leitner & Carlisle, defining various economic scenarios
 - Paul Tischler, from Tischler & Associates, fiscal impact analysis
 - Patricia Bidol-Padva, facilitator
4. Self-introduction of each Board Member from the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC)
 - James Pierce, representing Homestead-Florida City Chamber of Commerce
 - Phil Marraccini, representing Aquaculture Industry
 - Ron Weeks, representing the Nursery Industry
 - Cooper McMillan, representing Redland Citizen's Association
 - Noble Hendrix, representing Tropical Fruits Industry
 - Craig Wheeling, representing Florida Lime and Avocado Industry
 - Bill Losner, representing Agri-financing and banking
 - Ivonne Alexander, representing Agricultural Practices Study Advisory Board
 - Santiago Iglesias, representing Miami-Dade Agri-Council
 - Santiago Garcia, representing Row and Tree Crops
 - John Alger, representing the Row Crop Industry
5. Jay Williams, discussed the basic rules behind the "Sunshine Law", as well as the do's and don'ts.
 - Any meeting between 2 or more board members requires the following: a) it must be open to the public, b) there must be an advertised notice of the meeting, and c) meeting minutes have to be taken.
 - A meeting is defined as 2 or more board members discussing any issue that might be relevant to the study.
 - These restrictions apply to face-to-face contact, phone conversations, emails and all other forms of communication (direct and indirect, i.e.: through a liaison officer).
 - Penalties for a violation include the following: a) up to 60 days in jail, b) a \$500 penalty, c) removal from the CAC, and d) use of injunctions to prohibit certain actions by the CAC.
 - Board members can form sub-committees as long as they follow proper channels.
 - Since 3 people on the CAC sit on the Agricultural Practices Committee, they must either leave the room or abstain from all comments if the Study topic is raised.
 - CAC members can communicate with TAC members individually, or collectively if they follow proper procedures.
 - County has Ethics Department, Bob Myers, Executive Director. He can answer any questions the CAC might have. Jerry Bell will forward his number to all Board members.
6. Jerry Bell reviewed the Fact Sheet included in each Board member's folder.
 - He spoke about the CAC role: the importance of public participation and community involvement, how Board members are to receive and provide information and advice and how they can suggest information sources to the consultants based on their expertise and knowledge.

7. Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk reviewed the Scope of Services also included in the folders. She described each task's objectives, the consultants responsible for each task, the deliverables and the schedule.
 - She explained that the Board members will have time to review and comment on each task twice: at the onset of each task, and once a draft version has been submitted.
8. Discussion of the Study by Board Members
 - The Board wanted to know if final approval of the Study by all Board members before publication would be required. A need for consensus between the consultants and the CAC was emphasized to avoid a similar outcome as the previous two times such a study was attempted and voted against unanimously.
 - Lee Rawlinson assured the Board that they will have ample opportunity to comment on the Study, but that the consultants were hired for their expertise and to make recommendations. The CAC's role is to provide guidance during the process and their influence and input will be invaluable.
 - Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk told the Board that all individual tasks will add up to a comprehensive study and reassured them that there is no pre-disposition to one result.
 - The Board asked if the County will implement the Study and whether it will be meaningful? Lee Rawlinson hoped it could, said it would depend on the broad support for the Study and whether a compromise could be reached. He indicated that the CAC and consultants had the full support of the County and its staff.
 - The Board spoke about the importance of believing in the process and the ability to get consensus.
 - Patricia Bidol-Padva reminded the Board that she is here to help build consensus. She emphasized the importance of each Board member to take recommendations to their constituents. She encouraged them to break into sub-groups to react and interpret the data and see this as a constant interactive process. She will be establishing ground rules for all CAC meetings.
 - The CAC members will receive the material presented at Board meetings ahead of time so that they can be prepared.

Other Business

9. The CAC monthly meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of every month at 6:30pm. The next meeting is on 06-21-01.
10. There was discussion as to whether a chair should be elected at this meeting or not. 3 names were proposed and seconded: Craig Wheeling (who accepted) and Ron Weeks and Noble Hendrix (who did not accept the nomination and withdrew their names).
 - A motion was passed to nominate Craig Wheeling as Chairman, and Ron Weeks as Vice-Chairman.
11. Jerry Bell informed the CAC members that the county web-site will include a link to a section about this Study. Board members should log onto: www.miami-dade.gov, then select County Departments, then Department of Planning and Zoning, then Planning and finally Agricultural Area Study.

The meeting was adjourned.

Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ)

During the month of May, DPZ led several project planning meetings between the various consultants in order to achieve the following objectives: 1) allow the consultants to meet each other and identify their individual roles; 2) discuss basic schedule items for the next couple of months; 3) review the general scope of services, timetables and deliverables, and 4) discuss the interface and coordination of work between all consultants. DPZ also attended the first CAC meeting.

DPZ is in the process of compiling a list of all related studies (federal, state, municipal and county projects) that could impact our study area. A complete list and brief summary of each study will be presented to the CAC for their review and comments at the July meeting.

URS

During the month of May, Debra Childs participated in the project planning meetings held at the offices of DPZ in Miami and attended the first of the Citizen's Advisory Committee Meetings. In addition, URS has been working on the following tasks:

Data collection - 80% complete.

Data were received from UF, organized, documented, and reviewed. Several additional data requests were made of the County through DPZ. Information about the data was discussed with County staff. Some data require further descriptions (such as feature attribute definitions) for appropriate use in mapping and the analysis.

Maps - 65% complete.

Draft maps were prepared, posted to the intranet site in digital format, and printed for DPZ. URS is awaiting several data sources to prepare remaining maps.

Suitability Analysis/Model - 10% complete.

Suitability criteria identified in the scope and compiled by Michael Lauer were reviewed and discussed. In a meeting June 12th 2001 with Michael Lauer, and the URS project team, data sources available to support the criteria, their applicability, and usefulness in the model were assessed.

The following is a list of expected tasks for this next month:

Data collection - 95% complete.

Data collection should be completed during June. Prompt receipt of additional requested data is necessary to maintain the mapping and suitability analysis schedule for the project.

Maps - 90% complete.

Revisions will be made to draft maps based on input from the consultant team and County. Final drafts will be posted to the intranet site, and printed for use by the project team and July CAC meeting.

Suitability Analysis/Model - 25% complete.

Suitability criteria will continue to be reviewed and revised. Draft criteria will be distributed to the project team for review and feedback prior to the July CAC meeting.

Freilich, Leitner & Carlisle / Planning Works

During the month of May, Michael Lauer participated in the project planning meetings held at the offices of DPZ in Miami and attended the first of the Citizen's Advisory Committee Meetings. Both attorneys and planners from the Freilich, Leitner & Carlisle/Planning Works team have begun developing criteria to evaluate the susceptibility of agricultural lands to development for other purposes. They are also assembling maps and other background data to help define the alternative scenarios to be evaluated as part of the Project. Draft criteria will be reviewed by the CAC at the July meeting.

Members of Freilich, Leitner & Carlisle are working with DPZ and County planners to identify and collect past studies performed by other agencies that have a direct bearing on the work being performed as part of the Agriculture and Rural Area Study. Once these studies are identified, they will review them with the CAC and County for relevance and the extent to which they contribute to the work here. These studies will be summarized for the benefit of the Citizens Advisory Committee, as well as other team members.

Tischler & Associates

During the month of May, Paul Tischler participated in the project planning meetings held at the offices of DPZ in Miami and attended the first of the Citizen's Advisory Committee Meetings. Paul Tischler is in the process of further defining subtask 1C (Economic Outlook) aimed at giving interested parties a rough approximation of current land sale prices between the three different types of land development scenarios. His assumptions and proposed methodology will be presented to the CAC at next month's meeting.

Douglas Krieger

During the month of May, Douglas Krieger participated in the project planning meetings held at the offices of DPZ in Miami and attended the first of the Citizen's Advisory Committee Meetings. The contingent valuation work which will be conducted by Douglas Krieger will begin in August. Contingent valuation is an established technique for estimating the monetary value associated with goods and services so that they can be compared with more traditional measures of benefits and costs. In this study, contingent valuation will be used to (1) identify the goods and services area residents associate with farmland, and (2) estimate the monetary value of the goods and services associated with the various scenarios.

(source: taken from www.sfrestore.org)

FEDERAL PROJECTS

Title: Homestead Air Reserve Base Closure and Realignment

Lead Organization: United States Department of Defense (USDOD)

Supporting Organization: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Start /Completion date: 1997 / on-going

Description:

The 2,940 acre site is located south of Miami in Miami-Dade County. The base was closed as a result of Hurricane Andrew. The Air Force decided to dispose of about 2/3 of the surplus property for community use as a restoration benefit and to also allow for economic development and revitalization in South Miami-Dade County. Clean-up of the base is ongoing. In October 1994, the Air Force decided to make approximately 1,700 acres available to Miami-Dade County for use as a public airport. Miami-Dade County subsequently applied for the Homestead property in December 1996. In December 1997, the Air Force and FAA determined that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) was warranted. Three other federal agencies were involved in this effort: the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the EPA. A Draft SEIS was published for public review in December 1999. After public hearings, the Final SEIS was submitted in December 2000 which identified several preferences. The Proposed Action and Mixed-Use Alternative was preferred to the Commercial Airport and No Action Alternative. The Mixed-Use Alternative focused on non-aviation reuse. The development of this property is being offered first to Miami-Dade County - local redevelopment authority. The Air Force would either dispose of the surplus land to a single private or public entity or incrementally to many developers as market demands and opportunities arise. The Air Force decision was based on its goal to simultaneously protect Biscayne Bay and nearby national parks, minimizing negative environmental impacts while supporting local plans for economic revitalization. Miami-Dade County is challenging this decision in court.

Title: South Dade Wetlands Addition

Lead Organization: National Parks Service (NPS)

Supporting Organizations: Friends of the Everglades, DERM

Start /Completion date: 1997 / on-going

Description:

This involves the acquisition of approximately 7,000 acres of public and private land in south Miami-Dade County through the purchase of development rights, easements and fee title in the South Dade Wetlands Addition. This addition includes: wetlands, prairies, agricultural lands, rock mines and undeveloped open space. This acquisition will be a joint federal and county project and is aimed at facilitating and protecting South Dade wetlands by reconnecting fragmented wetlands and open space essential to the hydrology of Biscayne Bay.

- Are any of these land parcels in or adjacent to our study area?

Title: **South Florida Community - Urban Resource Partnership Ecosystem Restoration Project**

Lead Organizations: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS)
Farm Services (FS)

Supporting Organizations: HUD, EPA and others

Start /Completion date: 1998 / 2000

Description:

This partnership will enable community organizations, environmental groups, local agencies and other interested parties to work and partner together to address environmental projects. It will facilitate and coordinate the funding and administration of these restoration projects in Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties. The restoration benefits include: providing a comprehensive and community approach to promoting water conservation, reducing water supply dependence from Lake Okeechobee and protecting our environmental resources and regional preserves.

- Who has been participating in this effort?

STATE PROJECTS

Title: **Eastward Ho! Corridor Revival Development Trends Fiscal Impact Analysis**

Lead Organization: Florida Department of Community Affairs (FDCA)

Supporting Organization: United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)

Start /Completion date: 1997 / 1998

Description:

This study was commissioned by the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida. It compared the cost of the current trends in development patterns to planned development patterns (infill development and redevelopment) in a largely urban 150-mile corridor spanning the eastern portions of Miami-Dade to St. Lucie Counties. This is part of a comprehensive effort to restore, preserve and protect South Florida's ecosystem while limiting the westward spread of suburban sprawl. Its successful implementation will depend on the adoption and support of revitalization strategies and public and private investments guided by long-term plans. Various actions by individual residents, local, state and federal governments are outlined.

- Is this study completed?

Title: **Miami-Dade County Archipelago**

Lead Organization: Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)

Supporting Organization: Miami-Dade County

Start /Completion date: 1997 / 1999

Description:

This included 1,023 acres in Miami-Dade County that contain rockland hammock and the endangered pine rockland natural community near Everglades National Park. Some trees and plants are sensitive to adjacent development and agricultural activities. Also, due to a substantial reduction in acreage due to past urbanization, identified lands will be used as a botanical site to preserve these unique plant communities.

- Have any land parcels in our study area been identified?

REGIONAL PROJECTS

Title: **East Coat Buffer / Water Preserve Areas**
Lead Organization: South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), Department of Interior (DOI)
Supporting Organization: USACE
Start /Completion date: 1994 / 2001

Description:

This project involves the acquisition of land parcels located along the eastern side of the Everglades Protection Area in western Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties. The majority of the land is either undeveloped (wetlands) or contains very low density development. These lands are needed to fully implement the Everglades restoration plans. These benefits include: improved water supply for restoring hydropatterns of the Everglades, improved water quality and preservation of wetland habitats.

- Are any of these land parcels in or adjacent to our study area?

Title: **Eastward Ho! Brownfields Partnership**
Lead Organization: South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC)
Supporting Organizations: Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRP), FDCA, USEPA
Start /Completion date: 1998 / 2000

Description:

This partnership is a public-private regional, state and federal collaboration that targets the remediation and sustainable reuse of urban properties that are either underutilized or abandoned due to real or perceived contamination (brownfields). This partnership supports the Eastward Ho! Initiatives and Everglades restoration strategies. The urban corridor lies within Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties. This project included: an inventory of brownfields sites with supporting socio-economic and transportation data, site inventories, encouragement of community participation in the redevelopment process, the establishment of financial tools and strategies for streamlining the public process, the revitalization of such sites, and the redevelopment of four demonstration projects in collaboration with various federal agencies.

- Which organizations are participating in this partnership?

COUNTY PROJECTS

Title: **South Biscayne Bay Watershed Management Plan**
Lead Organization: Miami-Dade County
Supporting Organizations: SFWMD, Biscayne National Parks
Start /Completion date: 1998 / 2001

Description:

This project involves the preparation of an integrated land use and water management plan for South Biscayne Bay Watershed. The plan will direct the comprehensive management of land use and the quality, quantity and distribution of surface and ground water to insure the restoration and sustainability of the environment, continued viable agricultural production, adequate flood protection and supply of potable drinking water. The goal of this plan is to identify and establish compatible land uses to Biscayne National Park, while protecting individual land owner's property rights.

- What are the compatible land uses identified?

- How are property right's being protected?

- Are any land parcels from our study area impacted by this project?

Title: **Miami-Dade County Environmental Endangered Lands Program**

Lead Organization: Miami-Dade County

Supporting Organizations: Florida Communities Trust, FDEP

Start /Completion date: 1991 / on-going

Description:

This project includes the potential acquisition of 2,100 acres in Miami-Dade County. Most of these sites include the best remaining endangered pine rocklands outside of Everglades National Park, remaining tropical rockland hammocks in the county and extensive coastal wetlands. Most of the sites outside the urban development boundary could be used for agricultural purposes. These lands will be used as preserves for the unique and endangered plant communities. They will provide continuous connections to existing natural areas thereby increasing their sustainability and are also intended to buffer natural areas from the detrimental impact of urban development.

- Are any of these land parcels in or adjacent to our study area?

MUNICIPAL PROJECTS

Title: **Redlands Incorporation**

Lead Organization: Redlands Area Municipal Advisory Council (RAMAC)

Supporting Organization: NA

Start /Completion date: 1999 / on-going

Description:

The proposed incorporation of the Redlands (68 square miles) is defined by the following areas:

- on the East: the URB
- on the West: the C11 Canal and L31N levee
- on the North: 168th Street
- on the South: 360th Street

RAMAC wants to preserve and safeguard their rural lifestyle, save their farmland from urban development pressures and nurture agriculture by assuming control of planning and zoning. The county commission approved the formation of RAMAC in 2000 to start the debate and study of the incorporation process. First, there will be a study by a municipal advisory committee, named by the representing commissioner (Sorenson) and approved by the Commission. Public meetings will be held to determine whether the Commission should sponsor this incorporation ordinance. If approved, a boundaries commission will review the proposed boundaries, debate the size and shape of the Redlands, analyze its affect on unincorporated Miami-Dade County and present their findings to the Planning Advisory Board. County staff then put together a conceptual agreement that is then forwarded to the County Commission for a vote. If the proposal is approved, it then goes to registered voters in the Redlands area. Upon approval, a charter committee is appointed to decide what form of government the new municipality should have. When the charter has been completed by this committee, it must be approved by the County Commission, then the local residents. Finally, local elections for leaders conclude the process and a new city is formed.

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

- Previous Agriculture and Rural Areas Studies - (by the County in 1980's)
- Other Everglades Restoration Projects
- New South Dade Charrette (volunteer study following Hurricane Andres in 1992)
- Redlands Study (funded by the Knights Foundation in 1993)
- Others?